

1
SOME
CONSIDERATIONS
CONCERNING

Controversy in General,

But Especially on some late

RELIGIOUS ONES.

SHEWING

The Good or Bad Tendency they may
have by their Nature and Management ;
and a Proposal humbly offered to prevent
the Latter.

IN A

LETTER to a Friend,

WITH A

POSTSCRIPT by the same Author.

By a Lover of Peace.

*Charge the People lest they break through unto the Lord to
gaze, and many of them perish. Exod. 29. v. 21.*

LONDON, Printed for R. KNAPLOCK,
at the *Bishop's-Head* in *St. Paul's Church-*
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seller, in *Leicester*. 1720. (Price 6 d.)

CONSIDERATIONS
SOME

С И Т У А Ц И О Н

Controversy in General

But I'll be back on home lots

RECEIVED

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the Good or Bad Tendency they may
have by their Exports and Imports
and a Proposal to be offered to prevent
the latter.



1904

КНИЖКА

DESCRIBED BY THE AUTHOR.



T O T H E
R E A D E R.



THE true and only Design of making this Letter and Postscript Publick, is given you in few Words at the latter end, all therefore I think necessary, by way of Preface, to say of it, is, that it was drawn up in order to the private Communication of my Sentiments to a Friend, and to ease my Mind of the Trouble of that frequent Concatination which I find unavoidable to my self, at least, when there is a great Number and Variety of Ideas continually fluctuating in it in a confused manner on any Subject, which is thought to be of Importance, arising from a natural kind of Anxiety, lest some of them should be lost in Oblivion; having always found by Experience that nothing affords a more effectual Relief than ranging them into Order, and committing them to Pen, Ink and Paper, and therefore I hope you will be ready to pass over what may seem inaccurate or otherwise defective in the Style, Contrivance, &c. and chiefly

To the Reader.

chiefly regard the Sense and Meaning of it, which I flatter my self is intelligible at least; but because it is highly probable it may meet with a different Reception from some, who may think themselves too much affected by it, if their Censures be not obviated, I must desire them to consider, that not only by the Laws of Christianity, but the Dictates of their own great Diana, Humane Reason, they ought to grant me the same Indulgence they have so strenuously asserted to be due to themselves in all Cases, and then whatever is amiss will be cover'd with a Veil of SINCERITY.



SOME



SOME
CONSIDERATIONS
CONCERNING
CONTROVERSY.

S I R,



N Answer to the last I had
the Favour to have from
you, my Opinion is, that
when Controversy is car-
ried on with an honest and
sincere Desire of the Disco-
very of such Truths, which, when tho-
roughly known, have a natural Ten-
dency to promote Religion and Virtue,
and improve the Understanding, its ea-
sily

B

sily discoverable there appears a Spirit
 of Candor in every Line, the Opponents
 treat each other with that Modesty and
 good Breeding which is due to their re-
 spective Characters and Stations in the
 World. There is plainly visible a passi-
 onate Concern for the Errors and Mi-
 stakes they apprehend each other to be
 under, and a charitable and ingenuous
 Zeal seems to close every Paragraph, and
 the whole Dispute is no more than a
 kindly and friendly Invitation to each
 other, to make more diligent and strict
 Enquiry into the Nature of the Subject
 which is treated on. Now a Controversy
 managed after this manner (provided it
 be not on such Subjects, about which it
 is unlawful, or at least very dangerous, to
 dispute at all) is so far from being mis-
 chievous in its Effects and Consequences,
 that it may, and indeed often hath, pro-
 ved of real Benefit and Use not only to
 Disputants themselves, but to others also :
 For it hath prov'd the most effectual Means
 to set some useful Truths in a clear Light,
 which before remain'd in the Obscurity
 of Error and Ignorance, and rectify'd
 many mistaken Notions which have ge-
 nerally prevail'd ; it naturally whetting
 and sharpening the desire of knowing the
 Truth,

Truth, and excites to a more strict and curious Search into the Nature and Reason of Things, and makes Men more unwearied in their Enquiries ; and this the Experience and Practice of all Ages seems to confirm, by the making use of the Methods of disputing in the Schools in the Universities, and the Meetings in the Inns of Court for the tutoring of Youth, which have been found more effectual to hasten the Progress of Learning, than any other Exercise. It may not altogether unfitly be compared to a Person travelling, though on the wrong Road, yet whilst he thinks he's in the right one, goes carelessly jogging on, and is in danger of being lost, until some other, knowing where he is bound, tells him he's out of the way, and offers him some Reasons to suspect it, and gives him the best Directions he is able, to guide him into the way again ; upon which he immediately returns to the Place where he is suppos'd first to have miss'd his Way, and takes particular Care to observe whether it be so or not, and by what means he was misled, and omits no Enquiry which may make him more Skilful in the Road for the future ; by which means he not only becomes a more safe and easy Traveller

B him.

himself, but is able to direct others. In like manner does Controversy, govern'd by such a Spirit, and carried on with such Designs as I have describ'd, prove a ready way to improve Virtue, Knowledge and Politeness, not only the immediate Disputants themselves, but in the whole Community.

But on the other hand, when it is carried on upon other Motives, such as a vain Ambition of being counted the Head and Founder of a Sect or Party, an impatient Desire of having our natural or acquir'd Endowments made conspicuous to the World (which perhaps would not be, should be employ them on common Subjects, for then they might happen to pass undistinguished among the learned Crowd) out of a petulant Wrangling Humour, or which is most pernicious of all, a furious, though perhaps a blind Zeal, for the Party they happen to be engag'd in, by a Fondness to such Ringleaders, or lastly on Prospect of Preferment, when, I say, any of these are the chief Grounds and Reasons of our entering into a Debate, it is almost always attended with Indecency at the very best, but too often with Rage and Fury, and that sometimes so impetuous,

as to break out into opprobrious Language against each other, insomuch, that the Merits of the Cause are often suspended, nay, sometimes wholly dropt, to fall foul upon the Character of the Person; wherein oftentimes no manner of Regard is had to Truth, any more than good Breeding; so that instead of Reasoning the Antagonist out of his Error and Mistake, and making the rest of the World ever the wiser or better, he is confirm'd in the evil Opinion he hath conceived of the Doctrine or Cause, which is espoused by the scandalous Methods which are made use of to support it, and this (to pursue the Allegory of the Traveller) is as though the Person, who perceives him to go wrong, instead of offering his friendly Reasons, why he believes him to be so, and endeavouring to give him the best Directions he is able towards putting him right, falls foul upon him with opprobrious Language, and tells him he could never come that Way but with some ill Design, perhaps to rob him, or the like, and so they go together by the Ears, till Night comes on them, and they are both, and all who are engag'd in the Quarrel, left in Darkness and Confusion.

In like manner such sort of Management of Controversies as this latter, raises such a Personal Animosity not only between those who are more immediately Polemicks on each side the Question, as often proves irreconcilable, but also conjures up a Spirit of Bitterness among almost all who so much as speak, or even think about it, which firmented by those Emisfaries of Satan, whom he hath possess'd with a Spirit of Enmity to Peace, and who can cover their own Baseness no other ways than by introducing a general Confusion and Disorder, frequently breaks out into such an ungovernable Fury, as reduces whole Communities to the very Brink of Ruin.

Now, if we apply these different Characters of Disputants to the Multitude of Controversial Scribblings, which daily swarm from the Press, and Pocket Books, in this peevish and wrangling Age, in almost all Sciences and Professions, how few shall we find which may justly lay any tollerable Claim to the former in comparison of the Numbers which come up to the very darkest side of the latter ; a Reflection too Just, but withal so Melancholly, that it would be irksom to enlarge upon it. I shall therefore leave it
to

to the serious Consideration of those who are concerned, and proceed to another Consideration concerning Controversy, which, considering the design of this Letter, which is chiefly to shew the Mischief which may attend Controversy, and propose a Method of Redress, is not to be omitted, and that relates to the Nature of the Subject about which it is carried on.

And here I shall only take Notice of such as more immediately belong to the Profession of Divinity: For although such as are peculiar to any other Science, are liable to be attended with the Mischiefs I have already taken Notice of, arising from the evil Management of them, (a * flagrant and scandalous Instance, whereof has lately stain'd the most honourable one next unto it) yet there is very rarely any considerable Danger can easily arise 'merely from the Nature of the Matter treated on, as is the Case of some Religious Disputes, as will, I presume, be easily made appear by considering two Instances only, among many others

* Several Buffoonries, such as Tauronomachia, publish'd an Account of Quarrel. Drs. M---d, W---d.

others which might be brought for this purpose, the first of which is, when the Point controverted is the *Modus existendi*, of such Revelations as are more immediately and properly styled Myseries.

Reason and Mystry, for my own part, I always thought to amount almost to Contradiction in Terms, and though 'tis possible I may be mistaken in my Notion of the Matter, yet I believe I may venture to say, 'tis an Error so much on the right Hand, that had every Body else lain under it, it had been never the worse for Religion; for so nicely is the danger of Error, Heresy, nay, Blasphemy it self, interwoven with such Subjects, that 'tis hardly possible for any one to attempt any tollerable Discussion without falling into some of these Mischiefs, and if we observe with any thing of Attention, we shall often find those, who, on other Subjects, write with the greatest Clearness and Perspicuity entering one End (if I may be allowed the Expression) of a Disquisition with all the Shews of Reason, but creeping out, as it were, at t'other with an Absurdity, at best and seemingly hugging themselves that they came off no worse; and oftentimes

times it so happens, that the Dispute cannot possibly at best have any other Effect, than to distract and confound the Understanding of the Vulgar, instead of enlightning and rectifying them ; but may have a much more direful Influence, as weakning, nay destroying their Faith, and reducing them by Degrees to *Scepticism*, or Despair, and of this melancholly Tendency, I take, among others more especially, the present unhappy Revival of the Disputes relating to the Holy Trinity.

For supposing those learned Gentlemen, who have of late so zealously contended for the old exploded, and constantly refuted Doctrine, should be able to dispute some few Persons into their Opinion, they must be such as are of sufficient Ability to examine all their learned Discussions, compare their original Quotations with the Context, to try whether their Inferences be fair and just, and their Applications proper, understand all the Arts of true Reasoning, that they be not imposed upon with sophistry, instead of it ; and many the like Qualifications they must have, who can be capable of such a Conviction, as is absolutely necessary to procure an Assent
to

to any Article of Faith, that wants the Credentials the Gospel Revelation came accompanied with; for otherwise the Convert is implicit in the Authority of the Teacher, and then, after all his Pains and Labour, Perplexities and Uncertainties, he is, at best, but where he was before. And now how few are sufficient for these Things, in comparison of the Multitude, who may be infinitely mischiefed, as I have hinted by these Contests? What few true Profelites is it possible for these Gentlemen to make, were their Doctrine as True and Orthodox as that commonly received? But if, on the contrary, it be really Erroneous, to say no worse of it, What must they have to answer for the evil Consequence of reviving, and contending for it?

The incapable of Judging, yet Well-meaning, which I hope I may be allowed to account a very great Number, are, as I observed, stagger'd in their Faith; fill'd with sad Apprehensions that the Foundation of their Religion, to build up which hath been their chief Care and Diligence, should be False and Erroneous; nay, lest they should have been all their Life long guilty of the
heinous

heinous Sin of Idolatry, in worshipping a Created Being, instead of offering acceptable Sacrifices of Prayer and Praises to the only true G O D. The *Sceptick* and *Atheist* glory in their Infidelity; boasting themselves to be the wiser, in pretending to believe no G O D at all, than those who profess a Faith; but can't agree about the proper Object of it. The Libertine is more free and open in his Debaucheries; for let them, says he, agree what G O D to believe in, before they pretend to preach Obedience to his Commandments; and all the whole Herd of *Schismatics* have but too just a Plea for their Separation from a Church, whose Ministers cannot agree on Articles of Faith to be profess'd by its Members. These, and many more Mischiefs, are the natural Result of the Revival of the Controversy I am speaking of; and that which does not a little contribute to these sad Ends, is the Consideration of the Character of some of those Gentlemen, who are the principal Advocates for the Opinions thus endeavour'd to be reviv'd; for when a Person of the deepest and universal Learning, uncommon Judgment and Penetration, exemplary Devotion,

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and severest Morals, shall defend any Doctrine, those excellent Qualifications will certainly add great Weight to it, and make strange Impression in its favour on the Minds of the Generality of Mankind ; so that all those extraordinary Endowments, which have been acquir'd with so much Expence and Labour of the Mind and Body both, instead of having their proper Use, and beneficial Influence in the World, become abused to the most pernicious and destructive Purposes. One would think there should need no other Consideration to induce those unhappy Gentlemen to desist immediately from the farther Prosecution of the Debate, and not only so, but to do their utmost Endeavour to hurry, as it were, into Oblivion whatsoever they have made publick to the World on that Subject, and then may themselves, and their learned Labours, emerge again out of that Eclipse they are at present under, by growing Eccentrick from the Sphere of Orthodoxy, and sound Doctrine, then may they again recover that high Esteem they justly merit for their Work's sake.

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The other is, that when the Subject of a Religious Controversy, though not generally styl'd a Myſtery, yet is not without ſo great Difficulty and Danger reduced to the Standard of Humane Reaſon, that the like Diſputes about them have almoſt always been attended with the Miſchiefs I have been complaining of. Such, among others, is that concerning the Conſiſtency of the Divine Omnſcience, or as it is commonly call'd Præſcience, with the Freedom of Humane Will : How have ſome run into the Blaſphemy of making the G O D of Purity and Holineſs the Author of all Sin and Wickedneſs ; the Fountain of unlimited Love and Mercy, to be the Author of an horrid Decree, whereby numberleſs Rational Creatures are irreverſably doom'd to an Eternity of Torment, before they had any Being. On the other hand, how have ſome magnified the Power of Man's Will, to the Excluſion of all Neceſſity of the Aſſiſtance of the Divine Grace, in order to a perfect Obedience, which is in a manner to make the whole Word of G O D of none effect. It would be endless to enumerate the wicked Abſurdities Men have fallen into, thro' their bold Curioſities,

in endeavouring to unfold and pry into these Arcana of the Kingdom of Heaven. The few Instances I have made use of, do sufficiently make it appear, that there are many Religious Truths reveal'd to us, which from their very Nature are dangerous to dispute about, and are *potius mirari quam mirari*, (as was the Observation of a good old *Asketick*, and humble Christian) and are intended to command an implicit Faith in that infallible Authority which declares them to us.

I did intend, according to my first Proposal, to have dismiss'd this Topick, without taking Notice of any other Dispute but what related to Divinity; but on second Thoughts, there is a Controversy occurs to my Mind, which hath been, and, I am afraid, always will prove as pernicious to the Civil Community, as those I have been discoursing of are to Religion, and as the disturbing the Peace of all Society is a Mischief which every Member of it is bound to endeavour to prevent, I hope, good Sir, I shall be pardon'd by you, at least, for exceeding my first Proposal, in mentioning a Dispute which of late has engaged so many able Pens on each side
the

the Question, as would induce one to think our Constitution as great and unsearchable a Political Mystery, as those I have mention'd, or any other, are Religious Ones.

And really, in my Opinion, after all the Parts and Labour which have been expended, the Multitudes have only been danced so long in a Circle, as to be made giddy enough to stagger into any Precipice; for let us but consider how some Zealots for Monarchy on one hand endeavour to lodge such a Power in the Crown, as to make all Laws for the Security of the Subject altogether Precarious, and consequently the Constitution a Chimera; and unless the King derive his Pedigree without a Chasm from *Adam*, he shall have no Title to this Power neither. On the other hand, some are so fond of their own dear Native Liberty, that they will be their own King-makers, and have the Original of Government proceed from the Voice of the Rabble, not having ever read, one would think, those Texts of Scripture, *by me Kings reign, &c. he putteth down one, and setteth up another; the Power that be, are ordained of GOD*, and the like. Another sort will have all Right of Dominion

minion to be founded in Grace, and that the Saints ought to rule the World, by whom every one knows they mean themselves, but no Body cares to trust them, knowing that our Saviour, the Fountain of Grace and Goodness, hath expressly declared his Kingdom is not of this World; and remembring how well they answer'd the Ends of Government, when they had it in their Power. And thus, after an hundred Years scribbling on all sides, the several Parties retain the same Opinion, with the same or greater Zeal than ever, and for ought appears to the contrary, are likely to do so, as long as Government and Subjection continue Relatives, and no other Consequences shall attend the Debate, but those mischievous Ones I have mentioned.

Thus, Sir, I have given you, according to your Desire, my Sentiments of this Matter, with as much Brevity as I could conveniently; and now I crave leave (the Station you are in enabling you to improve what is proposed for the Use and Benefit of the Publick) to suggest farther, that if the few Observations I have made are Just and Reasonable, it will follow, that not only
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the Peace and Welfare of Private Christians, but the Church in general ; nay, and the State too, stand in need of a Remedy for the Cure of that Scab (to use the Expression of a learned and judicious Person) which this Itch of Disputation is the sad Occasion of ; and therefore it would be so far from being any Infringement on Natural, Political or Religious Liberty, for the Government, either Ecclesiastical or Temporal, to interpose its Authority, that it becomes as much a Duty as the Conservation of the Publick Peace in any other Case whatsoever ; but it may be objected, that such a Practice in Governours may be of very evil Consequence ; for under pretence of stifling Religious Contentions, and suppressing Heresy, &c. they may put a Stop to the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, Morality, and whatever else may be useful : And we know, that no Country but one time or other has had Governours wicked enough to do so ; besides, it frequently happens, that they are no competent Judges in such Cases. Now though there are many ways of answering these Objections, yet I shall rather chuse to remove the very Foundation of them, by proposing to lodge
the

the Power of censuring or approving whatever is published to the World, in the Hands of such as must be allowed to be the most proper Judges, if there can be any at all.

Supposing then there were a certain Number of the highest Degree in every Profession (for I can't approve of lodging such a Power in the Breast of one single Person, though of the very prime Order) appointed to be standing Censors, and have a Power vested in them to examine such Books, and Papers as shall be published in their respective Sciences, and according as they are approved or condemn'd by the Majority, they shall be publicly sold and dispers'd Abroad, or prohibited and stigmatis'd by a publick Sentence or Decree, which, with their Reasons for such Sentence, should remain on Record, and the Authors punished in Proportion to the Degree of their evil Tendency, declared by such Sentence, which Record should be so kept, as that the same Recourse may be had to them as to those of other Cases; and I cannot but be of Opinion at present, that a Judicature of such a Nature would prove a more effectual Method for preventing not only the Evil I

am

am complaining of; but the spreading and propagating dangerous Tenets of all sorts, than an absolute Restraint on the Press, (the Method generally proposed) for besides this latter carrying with it an Air of something Arbitrary, which always furnishes a handle for Clamour, it cannot answer the Design of a Cure of these Evils, because they may be propagated with as good, if not better Success, by other Means. This Method seems to me like going to work like Quacks or unskilful Surgeons, who make it their chief Aim to cicatrise a Wound or Ulcer, without having any Regard to a due Suppuration, and mundifying and Incarnation underneath, by which Means indeed there seems a Cure, whereas on the corrupted Sanies being confined, and by an evil Ferment contracting a greater Virulency and Corrosiveness, preys upon the more Nervous Parts, and admits of no Cure, until the Knife or Caustick makes way for the Medicine.

In like manner dangerous Opinions, and scandalous and seditious Libels are dispers'd with greater Industry, and receiv'd with more Eagerness in Manuscript, from the Pocket-book, or private Press, than the Publick one, every Body
D being

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being

being fond of Secrets, and have a more dangerous Influence on the Minds of Men meeting with no Controul from contrary Reasoning or just Censure, so that the Contagion spreads without any Possibility of Remedy, and this Pestilence that walks in Darkness, is more destructive to the Community than the Arrow that flyeth at Noon Day. Whereas by the Method I propose, there would in a short time be almost an infallible Prescription on Record against all these Diseases of the Mind, when any one should be so bold as to endeavour to propagate them afresh; and I am aware of no other Objection at present to this Scheme, but such as have been generally made use of against all Ecclesiastical Censures, and have been abundantly proved to be as good against all Judicatures in the World whatsoever.

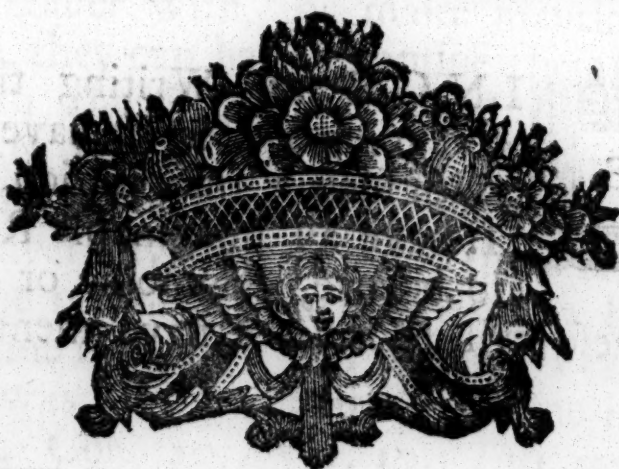
And now, Sir, it remains, that I should, according to Custom, make some Apology for the Imperfections of my Letter, bold Intrusion of my Opinion, and the like; and which, I must own, would be highly necessary, were I a Stranger to that uncommon Candour and Ingenuity with which you are wont to treat the Failings and Imperfections of the

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the rest of Mankind ; but having a just Sense of it, I should think my self justly Chargeable with the Crime of Ingratitude should I trespass on your Patience for that purpose. I shall therefore conclude,

S I R.

Your ever Obliged, &c.



D 2

POST



POSTSCRIPT.

SINCE my Writing the a-
foregoing Letter, I have met
with such * Information, that
I have all imaginable Reason
to believe, that some or other
of these evil Motives I have mention'd
in

* When Mr. Wh——n took his late Ramble,
under pretence of making some Observations by the
Dipping-Needle, towards discovering the Longitude,
he visited the most eminent Dissenting Teachers, lay
at some of their Houses, and had them gathered
together, and held a Conference with them; so that
I think it but too apparent, that a Faction against
the Church of England seems to be his main De-
sign.

in it, have been the principal Ones, inducing the Gentlemen of the New Creed (as some distinguish them, of the old Heresy, as others) to publish their Notions to the World, neither do I find any of them that can lay Claim to any part of the good Character I have suppos'd some of them to merit, except it be as to their Learning, of which they are so proud, and opinionated, as to treat all who differ from them with such an haughty Superciliousness and Disdain, that when, on any Occasion, they confer with, or make mention of them, they can hardly confine themselves within the Bounds of good Breeding, but are ready to make use of contemptuous Language, though they are never so universally Esteem'd for their Ability by the rest of the learned World; but I presume it may be said to these Persons, as it was by the Apostle by some in his Days, Cor. 10. Ver. 12. *They measure themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.*

I did really believe some of them to be such Men as I have described; but if the Characteristick which have been given me of them since, as I have observed,

served, be true, I find my self exceedingly mistaken; and I am the rather induced to believe them to be so, from the Behaviour of one of them, who is lately (I may say very unhappily) come into the Neighbourhood of the Place where I live. This Gentleman has wrote a great deal on some of the Subjects * I have mention'd, with what Judgment and Accuracy I shall not take upon me to determine, and hath laid about him in the Pulpit to the same Purpose, with such Ardency and Zeal, that one would have been apt to believe, by some Expressions he has sometimes made use of, nothing less than Martyrdom would have been his Choice, in Defence of his Doctrine; but I think it will but too plainly appear, by what follows, he is resolv'd to keep himself out of Danger.

This

* There is a Report, that at a Conference between Dr. C——e and Dr. Wa——d, the former, among other Dissuatives, made use chiefly of this, That it was not the way to Preferment to print his Book: a wretched Suggestion offer'd to so wonderful a Person, and if true, serves to shew with what Views that Gentleman has taken so much Pains in the Cause, at least, in some Measure.

This Gentleman (meerly upon the Score of his Principles, as 'tis generally believed) had such an Ecclesiastical Preferment bestowed upon him, as, it was thought by his Patron and other Friends, he might quietly hold without being obliged to qualify himself, as he must do for another Living; and though they were in that mistaken, yet he might have escaped any Notice, could he have been contented to have kept his particular Opinions to himself; but he, on the contrary, constantly venting them from the Pulpit, rais'd such Disturbance and Uneasiness in the Minds of his Audients, who are generally People of sound Principles, and good Morals, and many of them of considerable Knowledge and Understanding, and have been many Years under the Care of a Pious, Orthodox, and very Learned Pastor, that they were resolved to make him give such publick Testimony as the Law required from all Lecturers, that he was of the Principles of the Church of *England*. Of this he had, as I'm inform'd, frequent private Intimation, which yet had no Influence on him, he still persisting in his Neglect or Refusal, not think-

thinking, in the least, he run the Hazard of an *ipso facto* Forfeiture of his Benefice, (which, some say, he has actually done) being very loth to give himself the Lye, as I may say, in so solemn a manner, by contradicting and gain-saying what he had not only wrote and published as formerly, but what he had so often preach'd in that very Congregation where his Publick Assent and Consent was to be declared, which he was conscious to himself, he must do by such a Declaration; but to contract my Story, Application was made to his Pious and Orthodox Diocesan, who expressed a just Dislike to his Principles, and oblig'd him to subscribe the Articles, (which he did, to the Surprize of all Men of Integrity and honest Meaning) and afterwards to declare his Assent and Consent to the Truth of what is contain'd in the Book of Common-Prayer, &c. in the open Congregation, as the * Law directs, by which, and

* His Lordship told some of his Clergy, he abhorr'd these Men's Principles; and whereas Mr. Whiston had once preach'd for the Lecturer, he charged the Minister of the Parish, he should not suffer him any more to come into his Pulpit.

and a Private Testimony his Lordship was pleased to give of his just Aver-
sion to these Principles, I cannot but
observe that he has secur'd to himself
the Affections of his Clergy, and the
Esteem of all who are Friends to the
Establish'd Religion. But to return to
the Gentleman,

The Account I have had of his
Preaching these Doctrines, which were
the Occasion of the Complaint to his
Lordship, are too general to make
good the Charge of his denying his
former Principles, or declaring his As-
sent and Consent to such as are Repug-
nant to them, which amounts to the
same; therefore I shall take no Notice of
them at present, but shall rather chuse
to quote a Passage among Multitudes
of others of the like Nature, out of a
Book still extant in his Name, and de-
sire the Reader to compare them with
the Doctrine, Liturgy, &c. of the
Church of *England*; and I perswade
my self that will be sufficient to satisfy
any reasonable and unprejudic'd Person
of the Justice of it.

The Book is entituled, *The Grounds of
Ecclesiastical and Civil Government Consi-
der'd, &c.* London, Printed, 1718.
E Where

Where Page 22. after having taken a great deal of Pains to shew how much we are oblig'd to the Civil Power for giving us leave to have some Order in Religious Matters, he has this Passage, *As no Man naturally can have a Right to govern others in civil Matters, so neither in Religious without their Consent, and therefore the Civil Power may preside over all Persons and all Things (not Causes) that relate to Religion, and appoint the Publick Officers and Ministers of it, and invest them with their proper Powers.* And a Line or two farther, after having derived all Civil Power from the People, and condemn'd all as Guilty of an Error, who think otherwise, he is pleas'd to remove the Ground of Ecclesiastical Government from the Magistrate, where he had just before placed it, (which I suppose is meant by Powers) into the Hands of the Rabble also; for as he goes on, *So is it no less an Error on the other Hand to believe, that there is any Spiritual or Religious Powers, the Exercise of which may not be derived from them (the People) also;* but this, I presume, he hath most solemnly unsaid in the aforementioned Declaration; for thereby he assents, among many other such Do-

ctrines,

Strines, to the Collects for *Ember-Week*,
 and those in the Form of Consecration
 of Bishops, Priests and Deacons, where-
 in the Church fully expresses her Sense
 to be, that the Father, Son and Holy
 Spirit, are the immediate Authors and
 Founders of Church Government and
 Hierarchy; and now if there be any
 Truth in the Observation *Noscitur ex Soci-*
us, a Man may be known by his Compa-
 nions, I think there is too much Ground
 to suspect others of this Class of Writers,
 will do as he has done on the like Oc-
 casion; and so what can Men of Ho-
 nesty and Integrity think of such Con-
 duct, or what Credit or Support can
 such Men possibly be to any Party or In-
 terest they pretend to espouse, so long
 as they are abetted and supported by
 any Faction, from whence there is a
 Prospect of Preferment; or can hold a
 good Income, obtain'd upon Account of
 their pretended Principles, without any
 Interruption, they will Talk, Write or
 Preach with a seeming immoderate Zeal,
 but as soon as any Crisis happens, where-
 in they must abandon their Principles and
 Party, or suffer in their worldly Interest,
 they as readily chuse to renounce the
 former, as ever they embraced them.

Upon this Consideration, I can't but think it very strange to find so many Persons who are really Members of the Establish'd Church, of good Sense and honest Principles, so hug and caress this sort of Men meerly on their great Pretence of Loyalty to the present Government, and Enmity to Popery, when it is evident they are always prepared to prove the worst of Subjects to one, and the natural Consequence of their Writings is the daily Encrease of the Power and Interest of the other, as both Reason and Experience shews us; for surely as to the first, it will be allowed that he who is ready, for the sake of his Interest, to abandon his Religious Principles will not fail to do the same by his Political ones; and as to the latter, it is very Natural for Religious and well meaning People, who have a due Regard for their Souls, and are taught, that without a right Faith they cannot be saved, when they are confounded and distracted about it, to take Sanctuary in an Infallible Guide; and if the Report be true from a neighbouring Country, the *Romish* Priests, by their usual Artifices, have taken such Advantages of the present Disputes occasioned by these Gentlemens Performances,

mances, as to make a plentiful Harvest, and are, 'tis suppos'd, still very active and successful: The Nonjurors themselves, though I do believe in my Conscience they are most wretchedly mistaken, and that the Patriarchal Scheme and Indefeasible Hereditary Right, are as wilde, extravagant and utterly impracticable Notions, as some of those I have mentioned; yet, I'll be bold to say, they are better Subjects than these Men, inasmuch as in the Nature and Reason of Things, an open and avowed Enemy is less dangerous than a pretended real, though false and treacherous Friend.

But these Men by their incessant Clamour against the danger of Popery, defend the Protestant Religion and the present Government, which next under God is like to be the chief Support of it. Just as a Governour would do a Town, who should draw all his Garrison and Artillery to that side where the Besieged only make a Shew of Attacking, and there make such a continual Firing, as though the Enemy were just going to storm, whilst there is a private Breach at the other side, where they are creeping in by degrees undiscover'd, until they have got Strength
enough

enough to surprize the Place, the Governor being ready to become as good a Subject to the Conqueror, as he was to his former Sovereign ; neither is there any want of Charity in the Comparison, one would think the bare Reflection on these Things were sufficient to raise a general Indignation against the Principles of these Men, not only in the Members of the Church of *England*, but in all who sincerely embrace the Protestant Religion ; and since Self-Interest, Pride, &c. seems to be the grand Motive inducing them to propagate their Notions, it may be as proper a Way as any to discourage them, to shew an Aversion to their Conversation, and instead of carressing and applauding them, make them the Objects of Contempt, as the general Disturbers of the Peace of Mankind ; and such a Conduct is so far from being a Breach of Christian Charity, as some would insinuate, that it is a Duty enjoyn'd by *St. Paul*, as appears by several Passages in his Epistles, *Phil. 3. Vers. 2, 1 Tim. Vers. 6.* Nay, *St. John* tells us, *2 Eph. 10, 11. That by entertaining, and being Courteous to them, we are Partakers of their evil Deeds.*

Deeds. And if every Person who is desirous of the Peace of our *Jerusalem*, would but be perswaded to observe these Rules in their Behaviour towards these Men, there's great Probability, that they would chuse to desist; nay, some of them rather recant than to be thus used, by which Means the evil Cause being removed, its pernicious Effects would, in all Probability, gradually decrease, which, as it ought to be the hearty Prayer, and Endeavour of every true Protestant, so it is the chief Inducement to the making these Papers publick.

F I N I S.



And if every person who is
destitute of the force of our
would but be persuaded to observe
these Rules in their Behaviour, words
these Men, there is great Probability
that they would come to death; and
some of them rather than that they
be thus ill, by which means the evil
Cause being removed, its pernicious
Effects would be removed, and
doubtless, as it is evident
be the heavy and disagreeable
of every one's health, so it is the
chief inducement to the smoking there
I am, Sir, your obedient servant.



F I W 1 2

